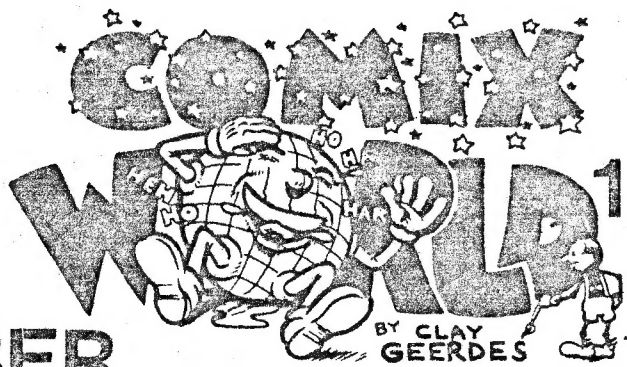




OCTOBER

'73

Like any piece of writing, this column has always left the control of the writer the moment it was turned over to an editor. Perhaps that is as it should be, editors being responsible for putting together a number of unrelated items and making of them an aesthetic whole, but for the reader it often results in confusion. An editor is never an expert on all of the subjects which appear in his publication. How then can he know what to cut out and what to include? He can't and doesn't. What he does is select what HE thinks most important and chop out the rest. The same applies to illustrative material. The editor has the power to choose whatever he likes and surround a writer's prose with it, be it appropriate or not. This columnist has often winced at the misconceptions and distortions of meaning and intention perpetrated by his editors, and, after one bummer too many, he has decided to control the material completely or not to publish it at all.

COMIX WORLD began shortly after the first phase of underground comix. It was named by Richard Kyle who ran the material in his GRAPHIC STORY WORLD. Intended as an information service open to artists, fans, publishers, and anyone else interested in the comix, it has run in numerous underground papers for over three years. Contained in the columns is a running history of every facet of underground comix. There are photographs of most of the artists, sketches of their lives, and bibliographies and reviews of their books. When I started COMIX WORLD, no one was reviewing the ugs at all, and most fanzines were lacking in information about this new movement in American graphic art. I made it a point to talk to all of the artists willing to talk to me. The reactions were interesting. Some artists put me on, others put me down, but a larger number saw a need for what I was doing and gave me their cooperation.

Before COMIX WORLD, there was no way for the readers and potential artists of ugs to know where things stood in the industry. Those in the local gossip circuit knew which books were in the works, which were open to submissions, which closed, etc., but anyone outside the Bay Area had no way of knowing what was up. Well, some artists want the ugs to be a closed trip, but that is not the way I understood the initial conceptions. For me, ZAP opened up the medium again, freed cartooning from eastern control; it meant, in essence, that any artist might get some bristol and ink and work out a story with the knowledge that it had a good chance of being included in an underground comic.

COMIX WORLD began at a time when the industry was productive and optimistic. The artists were all working and the morale was high. A lot of new books were coming out every month, and many more were in the planning stage. That is not what is happening right now in mid-Fall 1973. What is happening is economic depression and the morale is at its lowest. Few books are coming out. Print runs are small. Companies like KRUPP

COMIC WORKS in Milwaukee and COMPANY & SONS in San Francisco have ceased to publish. The only two underground publishers who remain solvent at this time are THE PRINT MINT in Berkeley and LAST-GASP ECO-FUNNIES in San Francisco and both are behind in their publishing schedules. Neither are taking on any new books. Most of the established underground cartoonists have completed books waiting to go to press, and one publisher told me quite frankly: "It's over for the peripheral artists."

Why? Well, the companies were hurt by the Supreme Court Decision on Obscenity. Not directly, but indirectly. Numerous small stores around the country simply decided to stop carrying the sex-oriented undergrounds rather than take the chance that they would be busted under the new ruling. This meant that THE PRINT MINT got returned ZAPS instead of checks. The operating funds cut down, publication schedules had to be revised, and some books were postponed, others, like SPACED OUT 2 and YELLOW DOG, cancelled. No doubt many artists' royalties were effected with a resultant lowering of their morale.

Add a shortage of newsprint and increased printing costs and you may begin to see where the problem becomes serious. Over or underground, the comics depend upon regularity and continuity. This is why publishers like Ron Turner have fought to maintain titles like SKULL and SLOW DEATH FUNNIES. Each issue builds an anticipation for the next. Fans go in a comic book store and ask: "Is the new SPIDERMAN out?" but they ask: "Is there going to be a YOUNG LUST 4?" because there is no guarantee that an underground title that appears once will ever appear again. The overgrounds have built up a confident readership in their 35 year history. Barely five years old, the undergrounds have yet to come close. ZAP fans had to wait two years between five and six.

What's going on right now in spite of the depression? PRINT MINT has four coming out this month. Justin Green's SHOW AND TELL, SAN FRANCISCO COMIC BOOK 4, MANHUNT, and one I haven't found out about yet. Turner has scheduled four: Lee Marrs' ADVENTURES OF PUDGE, Charles Dallas' PSYCHOTIC ADVENTURES 2, John Thompson's ETERNAL TALES 2, and a book called ORGANIC which he will distribute for Hector Tellez and Larry Todd. Others on his fall schedule include Barney Steel's ARMAGEDDON 3, Richard Corben's GRIM WIT 2 (color), Vaughn Bode's CHEECH WIZARD/SCHIZOPHRENIA, and a book called snapper to be distributed for Greg Miller. At the San Diego Con in August, Mike Moore said that Los Angeles Comic Book Company was publishing L. A. COMICS 2 and WEIRD FANTASIES 2, but it's October and no books. The Rip-Off Press has two reprint books out this month: THE BEST OF WONDER WART-HOG #1 by Shelton, and JESUS COMICS #3 by Foolbert Sturgeon. FREAK BROTHERS 2 has been reprinted along with FREAKS #1 on pink stock. #3 is promised for this Fall. Joyce Sutton and Chin Lively have finished the art for TITS 'N' CLITS 2 so Nannygeat Productions may have a new one out in November.

My advice to you new artists is hang on to your stuff. Coming to the Bay Area and making the rounds this Fall would just bum you out, because nobody is taking on any new books and there's no front money to be found. As soon as I get any new info, I'll pass it on to you.

CARTOONISTS CO-OP PRESS is a reality. Bill Griffith is getting it together and four books are coming out by early December. Scheduled are Bill's TALES OF TOAD 3, Kim Deitch's CORNFED 2, Jay Lynch's



"I can't remember a period of cartoon creativity as dramatic as the Underground Comics phenomenon."

-Harvey Kurtzman
Feb. 21, 1973.

NARD 'N PAT anthology, and newcomer Jerry Lane's MIDDLE-CLASS FANTASIES 1. Says Bill: "No porno, no science fiction, just underground comic books." Kim Deitch will do the cover and a story for Bruce Simon and Barry Siegel's THE LEAN YEARS. Samuel Beckett said "Nothing is funnier than unhappiness," and it looks like those guys are out to prove it. A comic about the DEPRESSION? . . . Check out "OH, WICKED WANDA!" PENTHOUSE'S answer to LITTLE ANNIE FANNY. Some nice satirical work in the style pioneered by Bill Elder. WANDA began in October, 1973. That's two issues you have to look for. . . . HEAVY! THE ART OF WALT DISNEY, Abrams extensive new compendium of Disneyana. It's glossy, non-critical, sentimental, and a book Uncle Walt would approve of, so get it for the art and expect little but laudatory prose. Beautiful reprints of early Silly Symphony posters and character model sheets as well as a large number of photographs. This one sells for \$35 until December 1, then it goes up to \$45. Most comic stores and art stores stock it. . . . The third of EAST COAST COMICS EC reprints, SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES 12, is out. A buck. Four stories, including THE MONKEY, a campy trip through the world of the forties junkie as seen through the eyes of the crusading narc. . . . DC's first biggie for '74 will be a gold-covered dollar-sized reprint of ACTION 1. . . .

If you like this gossip and information sheet, you can donate (COMIX WORLD, 915 Indian Rock Rd, Berkeley, Ca 94707), but I can't do a subscription number, because I don't know how long I'll do the trip. As long as the comix last, how's that? Send some stamps if you wish & I'll make sure you know what's up as soon as I know it. No articles please. I'll pass on relevent info.

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KRUPP COMIC WORKS is still in business, and Denis Kitchen sent me the second of Will Eisner's SPIRIT reprint books to prove it. This one is about P'Gell, a hot forties number with a penchant for getting married often. The stories are vintage '46 and it's likely P'Gell was the inspiration for that Shirley Maclaine film WHAT A WAY TO GO! Those were the days of femme fatale and "find the woman (cherchez la femme)." I've seen the guts to BIJOU 8, the issue where underground artists parody one another in the old MAD COMICS tradition. Beautiful color. This one, along with Richard Corben GRIM WIT 2, should be on sale by late November. Covers are to be printed at this writing. GW2 contains new work by Corben, and Jaxon DEATH RATTLE, his first color story since UP FROM THE DEEP 1. Last-Gasp is doing GW2. . . . WIMMEN'S 3 is a "fun and games" issue. Ed. by Sharon Rudall, it's due out in December. The Women's Comics Movement has been having its troubles with the Feminist establishment in the East. Ms. has refused to review or even to accept paid advertising for books like WIMMEN'S and TITS 'N' CLITS. On the local scene, a story was done for the S. F. EXAMINER on the comix and killed when an editor decided the books were "objectionable." Joyce Sutton and Chin Lively, co-owners of Nannygoat Productions (P. O. Box 845, Laguna Beach, Ca.), are calling their new book PANDORA'S BOX. Says Joyce: "Wouldn't you be tempted to open up something forbidden like that?" Uh-huh. . . . From Mike Moore in L. A.: "WEIRD FANTASIES 2 is temporarily shelved." Mike & friends are bummed out on ugs right now and are looking into alternative publishing trips.

NOVEMBER 7 3



Kim Deitch 10/8/73

BIJOU 8 is out and it's beautiful. A flashback to 1952 when MAD #1 came out. Cover by Harvey Kurtzman, a nude couple laughing in the midst of ecological disaster. Inside, numerous underground artists parody one another's styles. Jaybert Lynchton proves himself every bit the equal of Bill Elder in his GEEK BROTHERS story, and, in case you didn't know, Jay Lynch was cartoon editor of a new Chicago slick, COQ (pronounced Coke).^{*} Pages by Larry Todd and Greg Irons in the first issue (Jan, 1974). Irons' coloring books are out. He did Chaucer's WYF OF BATHE and THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION for Bellerophon (153 Steuart St, San Francisco 94105). Nope, nobody has done a parody of Irons yet, but stick around, there'll be more BIJOUX. Shelton's coloring book is THE MILLER'S TALE & that should be out by the time you see this. BIJOU 8 is in color, 75¢, and the word is that all the ugs may be up to six bits before long. GRIM WIT 2, Richard Corben's "Dragon issue," is a buck.^{**} Full color. Beautiful. This one contains Jaxon's DEATH RATTLE, a tale originally slated for WEIRD FANTASIES 2 which has been temporarily shelved by L. A. COMIC BOOK CO. Corben's art in "DEN" is excellent, but his theme is an old one rehashed--the girl as decoy trip he used in SLOW DEATH #3. GW2 has one script by Doug Moench, "Damsel in Dragon Dress," light easy-going fantasy. Corben often illustrates Moench's stories for Jim Warren's books, and collectors are advised to watch CREEPY for Richard's work. Battle of the humor mags continues and it may prove interesting to see what MAD does after CRAZY does "LAST TANGLE IN PARIS." In case you didn't know, Marvel's CRAZY is a freelancers' market. Editor is Marv Wolfman. #2 had some work by CHRONICLE'S Robert Graysmith. Note to Wolverton fans: GJDRKZLXCBWQ COMICS is out. It's SNATCH-size & filled with the master's finest caricatures. Call him a face fetishist. 65¢ from Glenn Bray, P.O. Box 4482, Sylmar, Ca. 91342. The laughing Santa is one of a set of Christmas cards done by KRUPP. P. O. Box 5699, Milwaukee, Wis. 53211.

^{*}folded after one issue, I'm told.

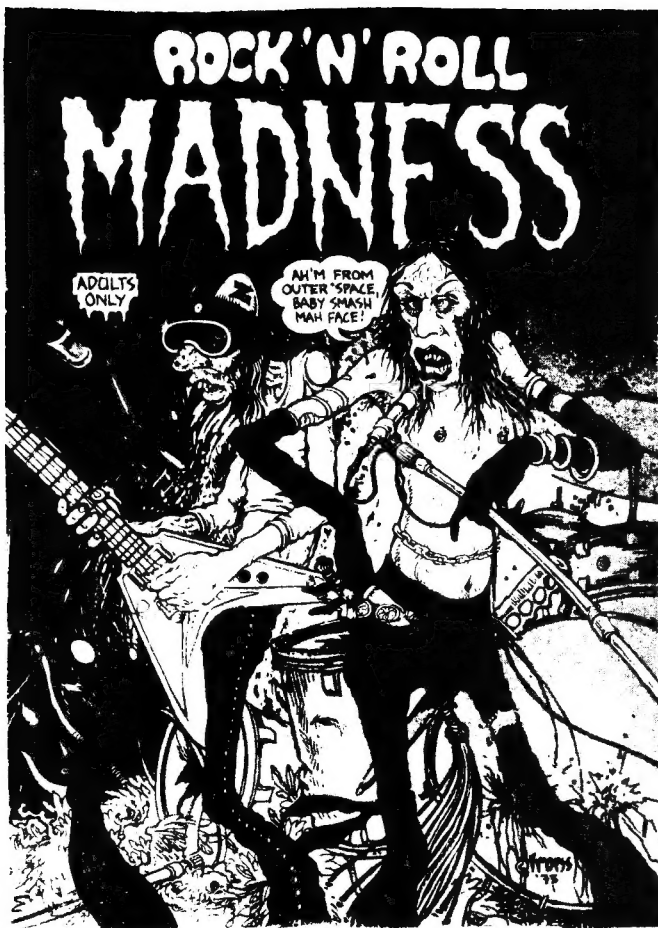
^{**}FROM LAST GNSP/P.O. BOX 212 / BERKELEY, CA.



Latest Women's comic is PANDORA'S BOX done by Chin Lively and Joyce Sutton of Nannygoat Productions (P. O. Bx 845, Laguna Beach, Ca.) Their ethic-aesthetic is to show a feminist view of life inside institutions like marriage and living-together. A light view in the tales of "those perfectly permeable Peters Sisters," and a heavier one in the tale entitled "The American Dream." BOX is TITS 'N' CLITS 2. The title was changed when the women encountered resistance from respectable (straight) publications, and they opted for reaching their audience rather than remaining adamantly outrageous. BOX contains Lively's parody centerfold aimed at S. Clay Wilson.

DECEMBER 1973





UGs ABROAD. This Irons reprint book available from H. Bunch Ltd, 39 Goodge St, London W.1.

 Funnybooks keep shapeshifting these days. Come in all sizes and formats. From Chicago Review Press: PRAIRIE STATE BLUES: COMIC STRIPS & GRAPHIC TALES by Bill Bergeron. Illustrated poetry. Beautiful line work. This one made me nostalgic for the plains where I grew up. Bergeron captures the atmosphere of the Midwest from trainyard to windmill. Available in most bookstores or write to Chicago Review Press, 5410 S. Blackstone Avenue, Chicago, Ill. 60637. \$1.95. From Sebastian's AND/OR PRESS, LAUGHING GAS, a book on nitrous oxide. Cover by Robert Crumb. Info: 583 Colusa, Berkeley, Ca.

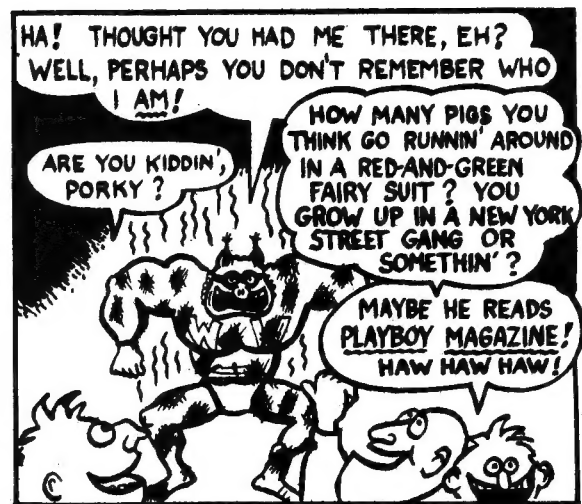
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RIP-OFF PRESS

BOX 14158 S.F.

THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIENCE OF ODD BODKINE is made conscious for the followers of Dan O'Neill in this final collection just out from Glide (330 Ellis Street, San Fran.). \$3.95. The first volume, HEAR THE SOUND OF MY FEET WALKING . . DROWN THE SOUND OF MY VOICE TALKING, is back in print with a new cover. O'Neill's COMICS AND STORIES which were published by the defunct Co. & Sons are now collector's items. Costly. O'Neill may be teaching a course in the art of the comic strip at UC Extension next summer. Write 55 Laguna, San Fran for catalog. The Air Pirates have all gone their separate ways. Bobby London and Shary Flenniken appear regularly in THE NATIONAL LAMPOON. Gary Hallgren had several pages in MANHUNT, and Ted Richards should be finishing the third issue of DOPIN' DAN before the end of the year.

Nostalgists interested in the state of underground humor in the pre-Haight/Ash days will find Gilbert Shelton's THE BEST OF WONDER WART-HOG useful. Rip-Off Press has published the first volume--1961-63. Kurtzman's influence very strong in this one. Shelton contributed to HELP! before going to L. A. to do his regular WONDER WART-HOG comics. The Hog of Steel, a take-off on SUPERMAN, appeared in RADICAL AMERIKA and H-BOMB as well as ZAP. A second volume will be published.



Thanks for the stamps and letters. Interested newcomers may contribute by sending same to COMIX WORLD/915 Indian Rock Rd/Berkeley Ca 94707. Pass the word around.

PUDGE 1 IS COMING!